
VQ Social Media Policy

Policy: Social Media Policy
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1. Background

This policy is intended to provide Volleyball Queensland's (VQ) relevant persons, Members, athletes, contractors and volunteers with a framework to guide their use of social media in a manner that is consistent with the organisation's mission. This policy applies to all relevant persons (staff, Members and volunteers). VQ expects its staff, Members and volunteers to use social media in accordance with this policy.

2. Definition

Relevant Person means any of the following persons:

- Individual Member;
- Participant;
- Employee or an Authorised Provider;
- Contractor;
- Volunteer; or
- any other individual who has agreed to be bound by this Code of Conduct.

Social media is the collective of online communications channels which may be structured around or in conjunction with community-based input. These channels will generally allow users to participate in an online community which may or may not reflect an offline community through online collaboration, content sharing/viewing, and chat functions.

Social media channels can include but are not limited to:

- Social networking sites like Facebook, Instagram, X (previously known as Twitter), LinkedIn.
- Video and photo sharing sites such as YouTube, Pinterest, Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok and Vimeo;
- Other platforms including Threads, Kick, and Reddit.
- Any other social media or photo/video sharing sites (even if not mentioned above);
- Blogs, including personal and corporate blogs such as Tumblr and Wordpress accounts;
- Comments left on blogs hosted by media outlets e.g. smh.com.au;
- Micro-blogging sites such as X (formerly Twitter) and Tumblr;
- Wiki's and online collaborations;
- Forums, discussion boards and groups such as Whirlpool;
- Online multiplayer gaming platforms such as World of Warcraft;
- Instant messaging including SMS and iMessage;
- Online dating sites such as Tinder;
- Podcast and vodcast sites;
- Geo-spatial tagging sites; and
- Livestreaming sites and apps such as Twitch.

Volunteer means any person engaged by a Relevant Organisation in any capacity who is not otherwise an Employee or Contractor, including directors and office holders, coaches, officials, administrators and team and

support personnel.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to VQ Relevant Persons, including volunteers who represent VQ, both in Australia and overseas. This includes, as far as practicable, suppliers, partners and contractors (in this policy Social Media Users).

The boundaries between a Relevant Person's profession, volunteer time and social life can often be blurred. It is therefore essential that VQ Members make a clear distinction between what they do in a professional capacity and what they do, think or say in their capacity as a volunteer for VQ. VQ considers all Members of VQ as its representatives.

Under the *Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024* (Cth), which came into effect on 10 December 2025, age-restricted social media platforms are required to take reasonable steps to prevent Australians under 16 from holding accounts.

The platforms currently subject to this obligation include Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X, YouTube, Kick and Reddit, though this list may change, and VQ will monitor updates as published by the eSafety Commissioner.

VQ staff, volunteers, members and affiliated clubs must not require, encourage or facilitate the creation of social media accounts by participants under the age of 16. Communication with junior participants must occur through approved organisational channels or with the direct involvement of a parent or guardian. Direct messaging between adults and minors through personal social media accounts is prohibited unless it forms part of an authorised and transparent VQ communication channel.

VQ is a child safe entity under the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld). This policy supports VQ's compliance with the Child Safe Standards, including Standard 9 (safe online environments) and the Universal Principle for cultural safety.

VQ will conduct an appropriate risk assessment of its social media accounts and before launching any new online environment. Relevant persons responsible for VQ social media, and any other employees who engage with junior participants online, must complete VQ approved child safety training.

Grooming, boundary violations and online contact of concern involving a child are prohibited. Suspected conduct of this nature must be reported under the VQ Child Safety Policy and Reportable Conduct Scheme processes in place.

4. Guiding Principles for Social Media Use

For official and personal users of social media:

- Whenever Social Media Users are interacting on social media, in a professional or personal context, the following guiding principles should be considered and applied at all times.

Please note that VQ staff and members are also bound by the VQ Code of Conduct, the National Integrity Framework including the Child Safety Policy and Member Protection Policy.

A Social Media User should:

- Not criticise VQ, sponsors, athletes, other organisations and their employees, volunteers or supporters, or VQ's affiliates;
- Not harass, bully or intimidate or display any other form of inappropriate behaviour as per the VQ Member Protection Policy (in particular Cyber Bullying);
- Not post content that is obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, pornographic, sexist, that infringes on copyright, constitutes a contempt of court, breaches a Court suppression order, or is otherwise unlawful;
- Not defame any other person or entity;
- Not do anything that breaches their terms of employment or membership; Respond to others' opinions respectfully;
- Subject to VQ policies and otherwise the consent of VQ not use any VQ intellectual property or imagery;
- Respond to others' opinions respectfully and acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly;
- Ensure that all information is accurate, not misleading and complies with all relevant laws, policies and terms of use;
- Only disclose and discuss approved and publicly available information and content (including videos, audio and images);
- Adhere to terms and use of the relevant social media platform/website, as well as VQ policies;
- Not post content that might otherwise cause damage to the reputation of VQ or bring it into disrepute;
- Disclose conflicts of interest where able,
- Not directly express a political affiliation on an official account or a personal account clearly associated with VQ activities;
- Not upload information of a confidential nature, especially in regard to VQ's services or Members;
- Comply with all relevant laws including but not only privacy and defamation laws and laws relating to use and publication of intellectual property; and
- Not use VQ IP in relation to any paid or unpaid promotion or endorsement of products or commercial entities including in kind services or gifts; unless in agreement with VQ;
- Handle personal information in accordance with the VQ Privacy Policy and not disclose personal information of any individual without consent;
- Not engage in doxxing or the non-consensual publication of personal information; and
- Report any grooming or online contact of concern involving a child under the VQ Child Safety Policy.

In addition, a VQ Staff Member should:

- a) Ensure that comments, posts, and responses from official VQ accounts are true and accurate;
- b) Not conduct a private business through VQ's social media presence;
- c) Not post content that is obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, pornographic, sexist, that infringes on copyright, constitutes a contempt of court,

breaches a Court
suppression order, or is otherwise unlawful.

5. Use of VQ Intellectual Property on Social Media

When using social media for professional or personal pursuits, all VQ members must respect the VQ brand and follow the guidelines in place to ensure VQ's Intellectual Property and its relationships with sponsor and stakeholders are not compromised and that the organisation is not brought into disrepute.

6. Use of Photography on Social Media

Photos or video that may be interpreted as offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racial or sexist must not be used in any way. VQ reserves the right to remove any inappropriate images from official VQ sites. Copyright legislation must be adhered to at all times. If a photo or video does not belong to VQ, permission must be obtained and appropriate recognition given upon posting.

Consent for the use of images of members in VQ activities is obtained through the Terms and Conditions of Membership. A member, or the parent or guardian of a minor member, may withdraw consent at any time by contacting VQ. VQ will remove the relevant images from its official channels as soon as reasonably practicable following receipt of a withdrawal request.

Regardless of consent, VQ will not publish a child's full name or details that could identify their location, including school, home suburb, training venue or regular training times. Facial recognition and automatic tagging features must not be applied to images of children.

Use of any official VQ photo or video content on a personal social media account, without approval or authorisation, is strictly prohibited.

7. Permissions

VQ may create social media accounts to engage its members, supporters and general public. Any account which represents VQ must be authorised and approved by the Chief Executive Officer. The account should identify itself as an official account representing VQ.

8. Personal Use of Social Media as a VQ Member

Personal use can be defined as the use of non-official VQ social media accounts where the person can be identified as a VQ Member.

Personal use is a matter for an individual user, however, individuals will be accountable for the consequences of their actions on social media if such actions contravene this policy and will be disciplined according to the policies and codes of conduct of VQ and their individual employment or volunteer agreements.

9. Named Affiliations

Accounts (be it a blog, Webpage, X account, Facebook page, etc) that are not official, but are set up by employees, volunteers or supporters of VQ for personal reasons can have an affiliation to VQ, so long as the following is undertaken:

- a) It should not have the affiliation with VQ as the primary identifier; and
- b) It should include a prominent disclaimer that the opinions of the user are their own and do not represent those of VQ.

For example, a staff member might include a bio similar to this:

"Likes apples and fishing, interested in politics and the news, works for VQ, opinions expressed are my own and not to be taken as an endorsement or representing the views of VQ".

10. Policy Breach

Misuse of social media can have serious consequences for VQ, and consequently that misuse can have serious consequences in terms of disciplinary action for Social Media Users under this policy.

VQ staff, members and volunteers must adhere to the terms of use of the relevant social media platform/website, as well as VQ policies and their own organisations policies and legislative requirements.

VQ's Complaint Handling Procedure applies to any alleged breach of this policy.

11. References

VQ Complaint Handling Procedure

VQ Code of Conduct

VQ Disciplinary Policy

VQ Child Safety Policy

Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024 (Cth)

Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth) — Part 4A

Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)

Queensland Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle